

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A method intended for thermal insulation, comprising filling a volume defined by the space contained between a first enclosure interior to a second enclosure with vegetable foam particles.
2. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said volume is an annular space defined by the outside of a pipe placed in another pipe.
3. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising solubilizing said vegetable foam particles by an aqueous fluid and free pulling said first enclosure.
4. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said fluid is about 1 mol/liter of soda concentration.
5. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the average size of the particles is below 5 mm.
6. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said vegetable foam comprises at least : a flour and/or a non-gelatinized starch, a plasticizer, possibly another additive, a water content below 10 %.

7. (previously presented) An installation comprises a first enclosure placed in a second enclosure, characterized in that the space contained between said enclosures comprises a volume of vegetable foam particles used as a thermal insulant.

8. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said enclosures consist of a string of tubings intended for transportation of a petroleum effluent placed in another pipe.

9. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said vegetable foam particles have the following properties : thermal conductivity ranging between 0.03 and 0.06 W/m.^{°K} and at least partial solubility in an aqueous fluid.

10. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said vegetable foam particles comprise at least : a flour and/or a non-gelatinized starch, a plasticizer, possibly another additive, a water content below 10 %.

11. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said space further comprises at least one of the following insulants : silicate foam particles, aerogel foam particles, dry powders.

Claims 12 - 20 (canceled)

21. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said vegetable foam particles have an average particle size below 5 mm.

22. (previously presented) An installation as claimed in claim 7, wherein said vegetable foam particles have a water content below 5%.

23. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said vegetable foam particles have a water content below 5%.

24. (new) A string of tubings for transportation of a petroleum effluent, comprising:
a production string connected between an oil well and a wellhead;
an enclosure surrounding and spaced from the production string; and
a volume of vegetable foam particles used as a thermal insulant at least partially filling the space between the production string and the enclosure.

25. (new) A string of tubings according to claim 24, wherein said vegetable foam particles comprise at least : a flour and/or a non-gelatinized starch, a plasticizer, possibly another additive, a water content below 10 %.

26. (new) A string of tubings according to claim 24, wherein said vegetable foam particles have an average particle size below 5 mm.

27. (new) A method for thermally insulating a string of tubings for transportation of a petroleum effluent, the string of tubings including a production string connected between an oil well and a well head and an enclosure surrounding and spaced from the production string, the method comprising:

at least partially filling the space between the production string and the enclosure with a volume of vegetable foam particles.

28. (new) A method as claimed in claim 27, further comprising solubilizing said vegetable foam particles by an aqueous fluid and free pulling the production string.

29. (new) A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein said vegetable foam comprises at least : a flour and/or a non-gelatinized starch, a plasticizer, possibly another additive, a water content below 10 %.

30. (new) A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the average size of the particles is below 5 mm.